

(b) if so, the cause of the fire and the explosion as the result of test firing of the missile?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) On 4th January, 2001 during the explanation of the working and loading of launcher at Bharat Dynamics Limited, Hyderabad, the accidental firing of a short range Milan missile took place. This resulted in outbreak of fire and also the death of a Quality Control Inspector, and injury to three other officers. The missile did not explode but there was slow combustion of the explosive.

A Committee was constituted immediately to *inter alia* investigate the causes of the accident. The Committee has since submitted its report. The Committee has concluded that the accident was not as a result of any sabotage but because of human error in wrongly loading a missile and pressing the push button (triggering) on the launcher in the process of explaining its working. The investigation has also concluded that the presence of the launcher in the building used for assembling the missiles was a contributory factor.

Non-practising allowance to doctors of AMS

1173. SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether non-practising allowance payable to Army Medical Service (AMS) doctors is not considered as part of pay for computing their TA entitlement as is done in the case of other Central Health Service doctors;

(b) if so, the reasons for this discrimination;

(c) whether this practice has lately been reviewed by Government; and

(d) if so, the decision taken in the matter to bring AMS doctors at par with other Central Government Medical Doctors in the matter of entitlement to Travelling Allowances?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Non-practising allowance is considered as a part of Pay for the purpose of travelling allowance entitlement of the Army Medical Services (AMS) doctors, as in the case of Central Health Service doctors.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.